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California Postsecondary Education Commission
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News Release

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University of California Irvine – Compton Unified School District partnership receives \$999,494 to address achievement gap

SACRAMENTO — December 5, 2008 — The University of California, Irvine, in partnership with the Compton Unified School District, has won funding for a new professional development project to help improve elementary school teaching in the core content areas of science and mathematics. The partnership has been awarded a four-year Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) grant of \$999,494 by the California Postsecondary Education Commission.

The grant will serve all teachers in the district's eight elementary schools with a project called "Teacher Efficacy Affects Math and Science Success (TEAMS!)". More than 105 teachers will increase their science and mathematics knowledge and learn how to integrate English Language Development into lessons in these content areas. UCI is already providing math and science professional development to teachers of kindergarten through second grade in 16 Compton schools under a 2007 ITQ grant.

The new award allows work to be expanded to all teachers in half of those schools, and supports whole-school reform with learning communities and intensive parental involvement. The grant is part of the federal ITQ program, funded through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to provide high quality professional development.

Over the past two decades, the Commission has awarded more than 200 grants totaling \$110 million to improve teacher quality. The 2008 grants, totaling \$5.8 million, address California's achievement gap based on race, ethnicity, or language. The grants improve classroom strategies in core subjects. The grants require rigorous evaluation to demonstrate how professional development affects student achievement.

"While the professional development provided by the grants is vital, the evaluation requirement is especially important," the Commission's Executive Director Murray J. Haberman said. "Being required to demonstrate the impact of professional development on student success, not just on teacher practice, supports the Commission's commitment to accountability in educational programs."

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Commission Chair Olivia K. Singh said, “The grant plays an important role in making sure every student has the opportunity to learn from a highly qualified teacher. The teachers who participate will learn new techniques to address the needs of students and help them become lifelong learners.”

More information may be found online at

<http://www.cpec.ca.gov/federalprograms/teacherquality.asp>.

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The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. The Commission's primary focus is to ensure that the state's educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities.